

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A ~~processor~~ microprocessor programmed to perform the steps of:
 - dividing a whole image that contains at least one region of flat content into a plurality of regions;
 - 5 generating a signature including generating signature bits from each of the plurality of regions including the at least one region of flat content;
 - embedding the signature without subdividing the signature by spreading the signature bits of the signature across at least a portion of the image which is larger than one of the regions, such that the signature bits from all regions
 - 10 can be extracted even if the at least one region of flat content has been replaced by tampering whereby the image is protected from tampering in the at least one region of flat content.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) The microprocessor ~~processor~~ according to claim 1 wherein the signature is embedded as a watermark.
4. (Currently Amended) The microprocessor ~~processor~~ according to claim 3 wherein the watermark is a spread spectrum watermark.
5. (Currently Amended) The microprocessor ~~processor~~ according to claim 3 wherein the watermark is embedded according to a trade-off between a payload size of the image, a robustness of the watermark, and a visibility of the watermark.
6. (Currently Amended) The microprocessor ~~processor~~ according to claim 1 wherein each signature bit is embedded multiple times in different locations within the image.

7. (Currently Amended) The microprocessor ~~precessor~~ according to claim 1 wherein spreading the signature bits including:

decomposing the signature bits to multiple areas or a single large area within the image such that information needs to be extracted from the multiple areas
5 or the single large area within the image, in order to evaluate the original signature bits.

8-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer readable medium having a plurality of computer-executable instructions which instructs a processor to authenticate images, the computer executable instructions comprising:

a first program module which generates instructions for a computer for
5 dividing the images into regions, at least one of the regions including an area of flat content;

a second program module which generates instructions for a computer for generating a signature, the signature being generated by generating at least one signature bit from each of the regions; and

10 a third program module which generates instructions for a computer for embedding the signature in the images without subdividing the signature, such that the signature is spread across at least a portion of the image which is larger than one of the regions such that the area of flat content is protected from tampering.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method of authenticating an audio video signal, the method comprising:

receiving at least one video image with a ~~precessor~~microprocessor;

- 5 | with the ~~microprocessor~~processor, dividing the image into a plurality
of regions including at least one region of flat content and a plurality of regions with
non-flat content;
- | with the ~~microprocessor~~, ~~processor~~, generating at least one bit of a
signature from each of the regions including from the at least one region of flat
content;
- 10 | with the ~~microprocessor~~processor, embedding the signature only in the
plurality of regions with the non-flat content; and
- | subsequently with the same or a different ~~microprocessor~~processor,
extracting the signature bits from the plurality of regions with the non-flat content
and, from the extracted bits, determining if the at least one region of flat content has
15 | been subject to tampering.

15. (Previously Presented) One or more microprocessors
~~processors~~ programmed to perform the method according to claim 14.